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Relevance of sex education for young people with intellectual disability: A systematic review

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Abstract---Of the various socially relevant crises of the world one that ought to be brought to limelight is the encumbrances faced by people who are intellectually disabled. People with intellectual disability are ones who face extreme challenges in their personal as well as social life. This paper accounts for a systematic review of issues and challenges in sexual life of people with intellectual disability. For this sample data has been collected from the online database like Scopus, Pub Med, and Google scholar and classified into distinct sections based on a bumper of factors - sexual aspects, sexual abuse/violence and role of care givers to people with intellectual disability. The chief culprit behind the sexual problems in people with intellectual disability is the lack or absence of precise sexual education. So, proper and sound sexual education must be ensured to the people with intellectual disability to root out the all the sexual health complications.

Keywords---young people, intellectual disability, sex education, systematic review, India.

Introduction

Adolescence is a critical period in the life of every individual. This because it is during this stage significant changes alluding to – physical, social, behavioral, and sexual occur in the body. Incessantly in case of negligence in proper sexual training chances of serious and shocking sexual complications could be high. [1,2]. Since the intellectually disabled rely on others to meet both their social and physical needs the people attending them must deal them with such affection and kindness in addition to imparting proper sexual awareness [3-7]. Such an amiable dealing and approach will develop among them a feeling of entity. As a result, they can easily merge with the mainstream of the society [8-12]. Feeling the pleasure of sexual satisfaction is one of the fundamental rights of each and every human being. So keeping the people with intellectual disability away from the feeling of sexual pleasure is so brutal and inexcusable. But since these people are disgraced with some limitations, special caring is needed both from the domestic and social circle to avoid them making misuse sex [13 - 18].

The proper comprehension of the real physical needs of the intellectually disabled in the part of those responsible - parents and the caring staffs, can also attribute largely to the sexual complications noticed among these hapless. An intellectually disabled need not necessarily be sexually impotent. So in proportion to the age, behavioral changes can be noticed among them. The caretakers of the disabled should therefore take time to study and understand the very many changes that could prevail in their body. Any childish approach should therefore be kept at bay. A concern, awareness and timely help from the part of the society can prove beneficial to these has who could thereafter enjoy the sexual life without having any social complications [19 -24].

The eminent researchers have pronounced that absence of proper sexual training as the root cause of many shocking issues – displaying sexual organs in public, sexually transmitted diseases, sexual violence etc. The basic right of freedom also holds true to the lives of specially abled and therefore their concerns should also be addressed by the ones surrounding them as well as the society. So to help them to understand in their sexual life both the society and the family must initiate steps accordingly and that through each phases of their life. [25-27]. As a matter of fact, in proportion to the sound sexual education they must also be supported with proper physical training against to retort against any kind of physical abuse. Besides, the training of this kind care should also be imparted to help them interact freely and safely with the society [28]. The paper is organized as follows; Section II explains the methods used for this paper. Section III is devised as discussion followed by limitations.

Methods

This paper forms a meta-analysis on sexual aspects of people with intellectual disability. Systematic review of the theme is not restricted either to qualitative or to quantitative method, since this review process has analyzed methods from both the data bases. Systematic review applies both qualitative and quantitative methods [37, 38].

Literature Search and data extraction

A broad search is conducted in the online databases such as Scopus, Pub med, Elsevier, Springer and Google Scholar, using keywords like 'sexuality and intellectual disability', 'sexual abuse and intellectual disability', 'issues of people with intellectual disability' etc. It has delved deeply to review both the qualitative and the quantitative papers to find the following topics.

- Sexual life of people with intellectual disability.
- Life style of people with intellectual disability.
- Sexual abuse in people with physical disability.
- Sexual education in people with physical disability and intellectual disability.

Assessment of data

Having collected the data, they have been systematically classified under categories based on selected parameters – sexual aspects, sexual abuse, and the role of caretakers of the people with intellectual disability in association with issues related to sexual abuse. Special emphasis has been attached to the age, gender and place. In addition to these, practical suggestions and solutions to prevent the repetition of sexual abuse are also given.

Thematic Review of Papers Collected Sexual Life of People with Intellectual Disability

The information associated with the sexual miseries endured by the intellectually disabled is meager in comparison with the innumerable problems reported. The causes behind these are could be – improper sexual education, absence of care from the domestic and social circle and limitation in communication. The researcher Gillian et al [27] after having done a thorough and prolonged study of the sexual miseries endured by the intellectually disabled proposed some practical solutions. Generating a feeling of confidence and trust in the intellectually disabled authentic details related to the miseries experienced by them in sexual life can be obtained. Having obtained the needed some possible solutions can be given to them to root out these miseries leading to enjoyment. Aiming to find the real causes behind the sexual abuse often noticed among the intellectually disabled a team of researchers consisting of Glynis and Ali [29] conducted a study among 120 people with intellectual disability. Among them around half confessed that they were free from sexual abuse. But the other half stated about their miserable condition. Having interacted with them the team unanimously confirmed that it was the proper sexual training that helped this section of intellectually disabled free from strangles of sexual abuse. This necessitates the importance of sound sexual training.

The study of Gillian et al [12] came to the conclusion that to a great degree the absence of moral and ethical training in the general society is equally responsible for the abuse and misuse of these hapless populations. Therefore, it also confirms the need for a moral and ethical society. The research of Gregorio and Eduardo & Michelle [31] [30], Healy et al [15] and Miriam [32] underlined the veracity of a

stark reality. The counselors deputed to generate sexual awareness among the intellectually disabled should focus not only the client but also the parents, the people of immediate dealing and the care takers. A proper training given to the caretakers and parents will definitely generate magic (incredible changes) in the sexual life of the intellectually disabled.

Sexual Abuse and relationship

On account of lack of sexual awareness, the possibility towards sexual abuse both physical and non-physical is very high among the intellectually disabled women [33]. Once ill-fated to the least wanted the complication will be very shocking [26]. So the possible solution to ensure safety from these sorts of abuse is to generate proper sexual awareness among them. To ensure proper awareness among them the service of the properly trained general practitioners is inevitable. These suggestions are put forward by a research team headed by Gillian et al., [27] having conducted a deep and through study among the women of this category ill-fated to sexual abuse.

The risk towards sexual abuse amongst women with mild and moderate intellectual disability is also found to be very high. This is observed by a research team Adam and Lindsey [34] having conducted a thorough study among 09 women of such category. After the study they came to the conclusion that the best way to ensure safety from such abuse is to impart sound sexual education yielding benefit lasting for a life time. Many a research has been conducted to find the real causes behind the sexual abuse of the intellectually disabled women. But no team has been successful in detecting the exact causes. The solutions put forward by the different teams are definitely inadequate. This is because the cases of abuse among these ill-fated women are found increasing day by day. A research team headed by Erin et al., [35], analyzed a deep study and observations of the entire research works carried out among the disabled women in US. Having completed the tedious mission, they unanimously reached the conclusion that since none of the research team has been successful in detecting the exact causes behind the abuse. They suggest the need for genuine research to find the exact causes behind the abuse must be encouraged without delay.

Role of care takers and family members

Evans et al., [24], A study conducted in Ireland addressing the sexual needs and difficulties in fulfillment of the disabled reached the following conclusion, the care takers can identify better the sexual needs of the intellectually disabled than their parents. Still the care takers are powerless to take individual stands being paid employees. So the only possibility left out to effect a satisfactory solution to the sexual difficulties of the disabled is to establish rapport between the care takers and parents. Dilana et al., [36] conducted a systematic review of the sexual health related needs of the intellectually disabled and the steps initiated towards the fulfillment. The review points to some realities that will help them to lead a satisfactory sexual life. They are;

- Giving sound sexual awareness to generate confidence
- Improving the quality of life.

Discussion

The analytical study exclusively aims to find the exact causes behind the sexual difficulties of the intellectually challenged population. Even during the expression and display of their irrepressible physical needs their life experience is entirely different from the life of reality. In spite of the amazing material growth and development, the attitude of the society towards the sidelined has not been found changed to a feeling a degree. An attitude of contempt and disgust towards the sidelined is totally inhumane. So it is obligatory upon us as an individual to effect a drastic change rooted on love and affection in our approach and dealing with them. Such an amiable approach can cause feeling improvement in the life of this hapless population [15, 28, 39 - 44].

Limitation

For the review the data is collected from the research works conducted in the western countries like; USA, UK, Canada, Australia etc. Concentrating on a special area overlooking the other is not justifiable. So it is necessary to extent the research work in the lands of low economic and material development. Only after a thorough and proper understanding of the stark realities, satisfactory and reliable solution can be offered to any problem.

Conclusion

The presence of the population with intellectual deformity is an eternal sorrow and agony both to the family and to the society. So the best step to root out the above is to ensure that the child expecting is free from the above mentioned deformity. Here lies the importance of the adage "Prevention is better than cure".

Compliance with ethical standards

- Disclosure of potential conflicts of interest.
Author A declares that he/she has no conflict of interest. Author B declares that he/she has no conflict of interest.
- Research involving human participants and/or animals.
Our Paper is a Systematic review based on literature survey.
- Informed consent
Review paper is based on Literature survey.

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